

Section A. Introduction

Section A. Introduction

Table of Contents

A.1 Purpose of the IRWM Plan	A-1
A.1.1 Regions and Sub-Regions Included in the IRWM Plan	A-1
A.1.2 IRWM Plan Financial Sponsorship	A-3
A.1.3 Point of Contact	A-3
A.1.4 IRWM Plan Adoption	A-3
A.2 An IRWM Plan for San Luis Obispo County	A-4
A.3 IRWM Plan Benefits and Need for Updates	A-5
A.3.1 Update to the IRWM Plan	A-6
A.4 IRWM Plan Development Process	A-8
A.5 Prioritized Changes	A-9
A.6 Meeting the 2012 IRWM Plan Guideline Requirements	A-9

Figures

Figure A-1. IRWM Plan Region, Sub-Regions, and Water Planning Areas	A-2
Figure A-2. Introducing New Material to the IRWM Plan	A-7
Figure A-3. Simplified 8-Step Approach to Updating the IRWM Plan	A-8
Figure A-4. Tiered Improvements to IRWM Sections	A-9

Tables

Table A-1. List of Participating Member Agencies	A-4
Table A-2. IRWM Plan Update Standards Reference	A-10

(This page Intentionally left blank)

Section A. Introduction

This section describes the purpose of the San Luis Obispo County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWM Plan) and the regulatory guidelines and requirements driving much of the content and material included in the plan. In addition, this section serves as a roadmap for the IRWM Plan and includes brief descriptions and references to those portions of the plan where topic-related information is located. This section describes how the IRWM Plan meets the overall 2012 California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Guidelines (State Guidelines), and requirements for DWR approval specified in Appendix H of the State Guidelines, *The Final Plan Review Process*.

A.1 PURPOSE OF THE IRWM PLAN

This IRWM Plan presents a comprehensive water resources management approach to managing the region's water resources, focusing on strategies to improve the sustainability of current and future needs of San Luis Obispo County. It is built on the existing foundation of the region's longstanding inter-agency cooperation and stakeholder collaboration.

This plan was written to meet the latest IRWM requirements, balancing the needs of the participating agencies with the State's need to have a full, well thought-out plan on which to base implementation of future water resources projects/programs and provide the maximum benefit wherever and whenever needed.

A.1.1 Regions and Sub-Regions Included in the IRWM Plan

The region covered by this IRWM Plan is the whole of San Luis Obispo County, whose boundary is concurrent with that of the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) (see **Figure A-1**). The County's 3,304 square mile area is further divided into three sub-regions: the North Coast Sub-Region, the North County Sub-Region, and the South County Sub-Region. Within the sub-regions, there are 16 Water Planning Areas (WPAs) and 26 watersheds. Sub-regions and WPAs are both useful in differentiating among local issues and allowing for meaningful, focused stakeholder involvement. A detailed description of the IRWM region, Sub-Regions, WPAs, and watersheds are included in **Section C – Region Description**.

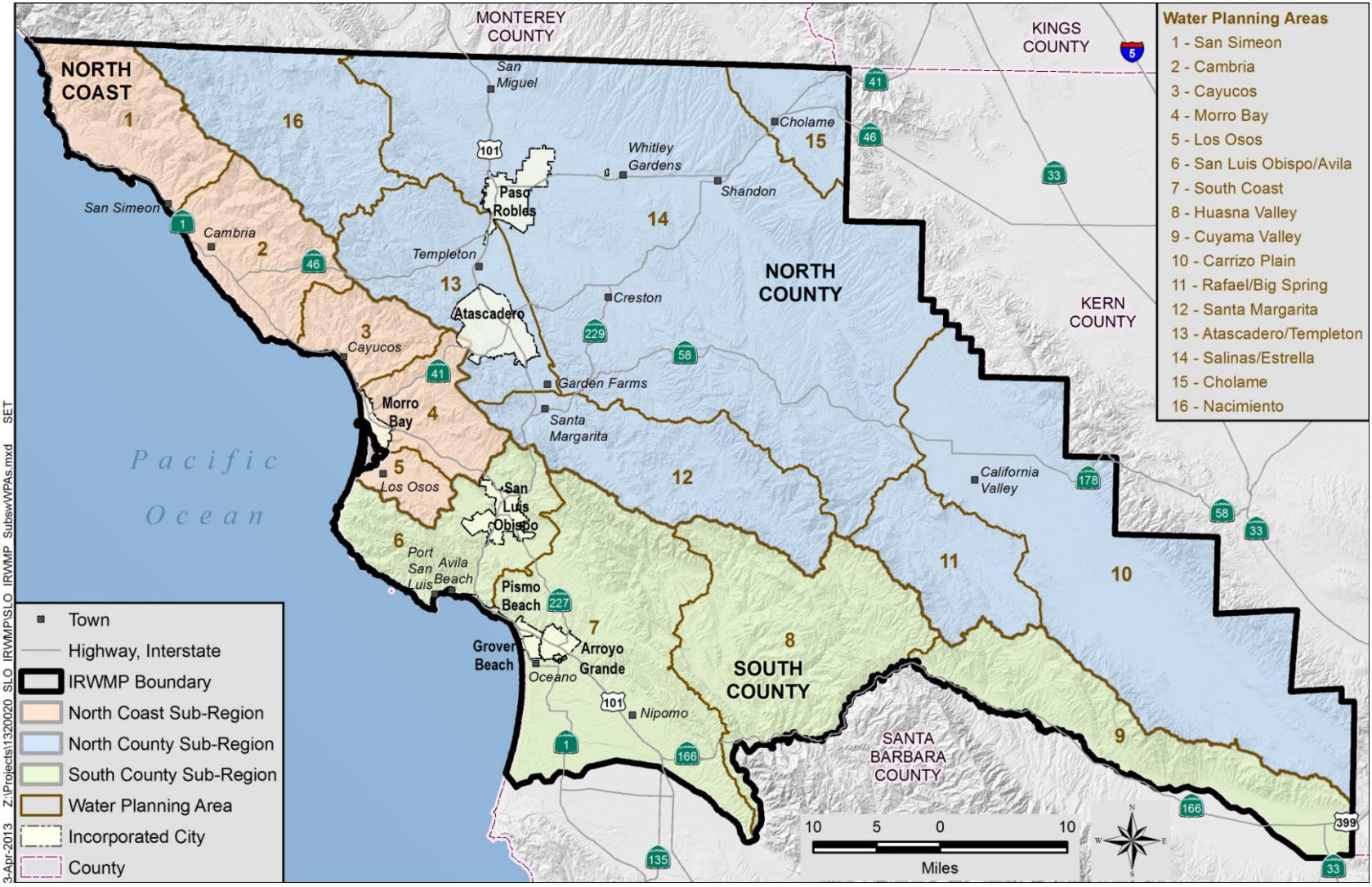


Figure A-1. IRWM Plan Region, Sub-Regions, and Water Planning Areas

A.1.2 IRWM Plan Financial Sponsorship

The San Luis Obispo County IRWM Plan is being produced and sponsored in significant part by the District. The update is also funded in part through a Proposition 84 IRWM Plan Planning Grant from the California DWR. Additional sponsors include San Luis Obispo County, San Luis Obispo County Flood Control Zone 1/1A, and the Nipomo Community Services District. All RWMG member agencies and organizations provided in-kind services associated with contributions of information, meeting attendance and document review.

Additional information is available at the following Internet website:

<http://www.slocountywater.org/site/Frequent%20Downloads/Integrated%20Regional%20Water%20Management%20Plan/>

A.1.3 Point of Contact

Questions and comments on this IRWM Plan can be directed to:

IRWM Program Manager
County of San Luis Obispo, Department of Public Works
County Government Center, Room 206
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408
(805) 781- 5252
(805) 781-1229(fax)
cberg@co.slo.ca.us

A.1.4 IRWM Plan Adoption

The District Board of Supervisors adopted this IRWM Plan by resolution [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]. A copy of the resolution can be found in **Appendix A – Resolution of Adoption**. Each individual participating member agency (see **Table A-1**) of the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) is required by the State Guidelines to also adopt the DWR-approved plan to be eligible to receive future state grant funding. Plan adoption by a member agency also ensures regional support for locally-sponsored water resources projects funded through all state, federal, and local grant and loan programs. The IRWM Plan is considered to be a living guidance document for all member agencies to support, and re-adopt, with each IRWM Plan update (approximately every 5 years).

The 2013/14 San Luis Obispo County IRWM Plan was published as a draft document for public review on June 4, 2014. It was duly noticed in accordance with §6066 of the Government Code

in the local media. The public was provided opportunities to comment in writing during a public meeting and/or at a regular RWMG meeting. RWMG members were responsible for taking the document back to their respective stakeholder groups for review and comment, consolidating comments and bringing the information back to the RWMG. Public comments were reviewed and reconciled by the RWMG and a final IRWM Plan was produced for adoption by resolution. Once the RWMG adopted the IRWM Plan, the final document was taken to the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) for approval and recommendation to the County’s Board of Supervisors for their approval.

Table A-1. List of Participating Member Agencies

Regional Water Management Group	
San Luis Obispo County	Heritage Ranch CSD
San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District	Land Conservancy
California Men’s Colony	Los Osos CSD
Cambria Community Services District (CSD)	Morro Bay National Estuary Program
City of Arroyo Grande	Nacimiento Regional Water Management Advisory Committee
City of Grover Beach	Nipomo CSD
City of Morro Bay	Oceano CSD
City of Paso Robles	Templeton CSD
City of Pismo Beach	San Miguel CSD
City of San Luis Obispo	San Simeon CSD
Central Coast Salmon Enhancement	S&T Mutual Water Company
Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District	Upper Salinas - Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

Note: Currently, there are 24 members to the RWMG; most are participating as project sponsors and intend to adopt this plan after adoption by the District Board of Supervisors and the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.

A.2 AN IRWM PLAN FOR SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

IRWM is a collaborative effort to manage all aspects of water resources in a region. IRWM crosses jurisdictional, watershed, and political boundaries; involves multiple agencies, stakeholders, individuals, and groups; and attempts to address the issues and differing perspectives of all entities involved through mutually beneficial solutions. An IRWM Plan is a significant document that:

- Describes the Region and its water management strategies
- Reviews the Region’s water issues (e.g., supply, quality, storage, conveyance, etc.)
- Puts forward strategies to address solutions for those issues
- Suggests actions, programs, and capital projects to carry out those strategies

- Prioritizes and integrates those actions, programs, and capital projects
- Establishes metrics to measure and manage collected data to show the potential improvements, benefits, and impacts of the plan
- Provides a methodology to carry out those actions, programs and capital projects
- Monitors the plan’s progress and makes adjustments when needed

It is a plan for near-term water management in a particular region that includes a stakeholder-driven short list of the best integrated water projects for the region as identified within this update of the plan. The use of the phrase “near-term” is indicative of the fact that the plan is updated on a fairly regular cycle (typically five year intervals), and thus the plan of the future will continue to evolve while addressing water management issues beyond the current planning horizon.

The process, procedures, and requirements of an IRWM Plan are provided in the California DWR IRWM Grant Program Guidelines (2012 IRWM Plan Guidelines or 2012 Guidelines). The 2012 Guidelines document establishes what DWR will use to implement the IRWM Implementation Grant Program authorized under Proposition 84 (The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006) and the related Storm Water Flood Management (SWFM) Grant Program funded under Proposition 1E (The Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Act of 2006). The 2012 Guidelines specify the standards of review and includes a specific list of requirements that must be included in the plan prior to the State’s acceptance and approval of the plan.

While IRWM Plans had been governed by earlier Proposition 50 statutes for general items, a plan developed under the more recent Proposition 84 requirements must also address the following:

- Climate change
- Flood and storm water management
- Outreach to Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)
- Integration with Land Use planning

A.3 IRWM PLAN BENEFITS AND NEED FOR UPDATES

An IRWM Plan provides a number of benefits for the Region and its participants. An IRWM Plan:

- Provides an in-depth listing of regional water resources problems
- Helps focus funding priorities and estimate staffing requirements
- Provides opportunities for diverse and integrated solutions to water resource problems

- Makes a concerted and documented effort to include the entire community in water resources planning, including disadvantaged communities (DACs)
- Provides opportunities to formulate integrated programs and projects for multiple benefits for the Region
- Allows the Region to apply for and accept State funding to address water issues
- Makes the Region participants eligible for planning and implementation grants
- Provides a consolidated and inclusive planning process
- Aligns participants to support projects that benefit the region as a whole
- Presents a more economic approach to tackle regional problems by combining administrative and planning costs of several agencies for some regional issues
- Enhances the foundation for “good” regional planning

A.3.1 Update to the IRWM Plan

The San Luis Obispo County IRWM Plan was originally adopted in December 2005 and amended in July 2007. The 2005 IRWM Plan identified planning efforts to fill data gaps in four areas to support the overall plan goals, objectives, and strategies, and improve the IRWM Plan itself. The timing of these projects are illustrated in **Figure A-2** and listed below:

- Data Enhancement Plan
- Flood Management Plan
- Groundwater Banking Plan
- Regional Permitting Plan

The 2007 IRWM Plan was the first to provide a cornerstone document for future integrated planning efforts that lead to more collaboration among water resources agencies and efficiencies in water resources problem-solving. These planning efforts were awarded \$500,000 to complete the focused studies included in the Proposition 50 Chapter 8 IRWM Planning Grant application. The resulting plans were completed in 2008 and thus, were not incorporated into the 2007 IRWM Plan update. The 2007 IRWM Plan updated regional and project information to better represent the existing conditions and priorities for the region.

In 2011, the IRWM Region was awarded an implementation grant to construct three projects, including:

1. Los Osos Community Wastewater Project,
2. Flood Control Zone 1/1A Waterway Management Program, 1st Year Vegetation and Sediment Management Project, and
3. Nipomo Waterline Intertie Project.

Introducing New Material to the IRWM Plan

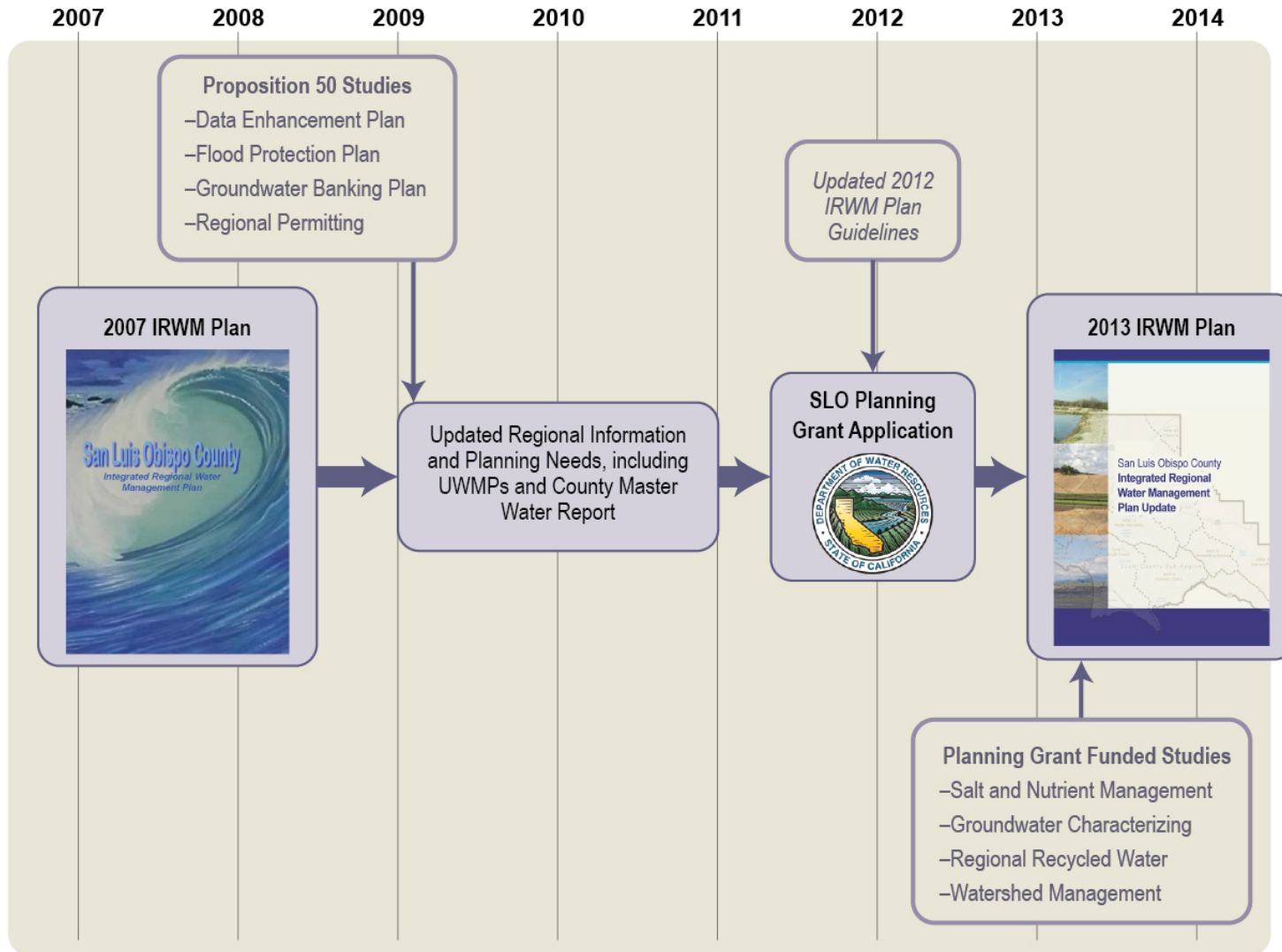


Figure A-2. Introducing New Material to the IRWM Plan

A condition of the implementation grant was to update the 2007 IRWM Plan to meet ongoing updates to the 2012 IRWM Plan Guidelines eventually published by the State in November 2012. Given the seven-year period since the last update, the District is capitalizing on the requirement to update the IRWM Plan by addressing the changed conditions and needs in the region as depicted in **Figure A-2**.

The objectives of this 2014 IRWM Plan Update to incorporate changes that have occurred since 2007 are as follows:

- Build on the successful collaboration and planning presented in the 2007 IRWM Plan
- Incorporate the four Proposition 50 planning studies
- Address the enhanced IRWM planning standards
- Include changed regional conditions (i.e., groundwater/surface water availability and increased agricultural and urban water demands) and enhanced planning approaches, including a revised governance approach
- Address the highest priority data gaps and planning needs as determined through a public solicitation and review process

A.4 IRWM PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Region’s stakeholders have followed a systematic 8-Step process for developing project-level elements for inclusion in the plan as shown in **Figure A-3**.

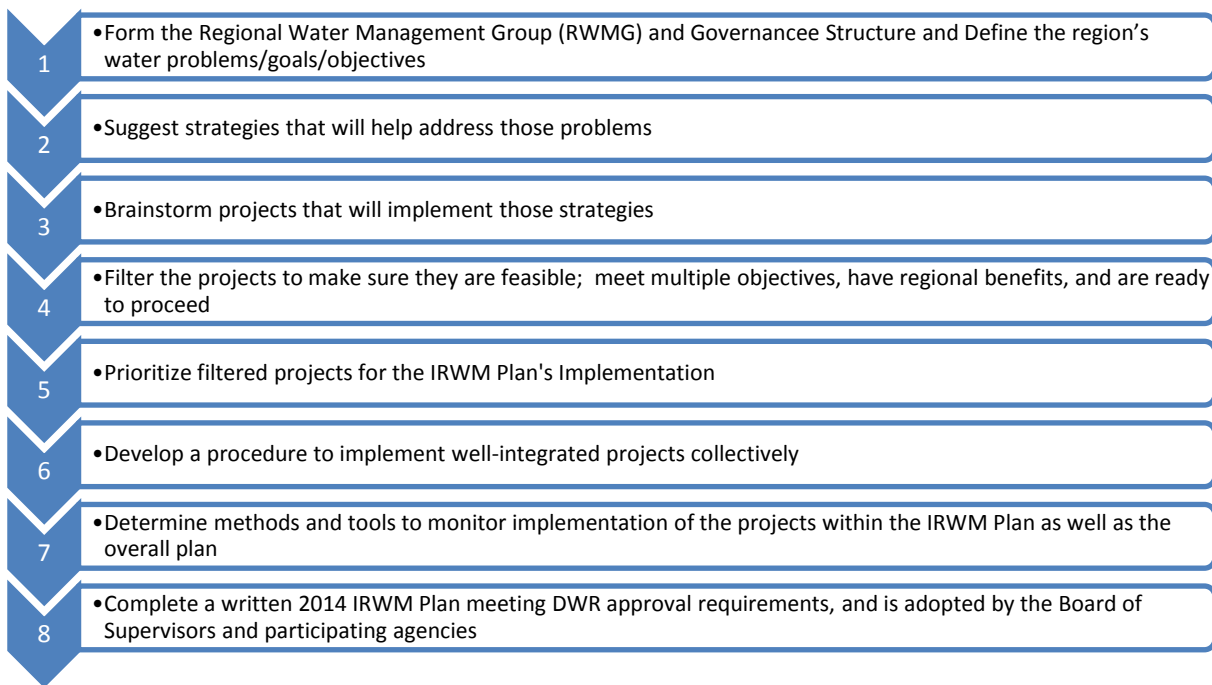


Figure A-3. Simplified 8-Step Approach to Updating the IRWM Plan

A.5 PRIORITIZED CHANGES

For purposes of the update to the 2007 IRWM Plan, section deficiencies were categorized into three tiers and listed in **Figure A-4**:

- **Tier 1** – Sections that require significant modification to address new standards that were not included in the previous guidelines (e.g., climate change) and the sections that need to reflect the revised governance approach for improved IRWM Planning
- **Tier 2** – Sections that require a moderate amount of modification to more fully address the plan standards and reflect current conditions
- **Tier 3** – Sections that require limited modification and the updates are primarily additional information/modification to reflect current conditions in the IRWM planning area



Figure A-4. Tiered Improvements to IRWM Sections

All sections in each Tier require updating; however, Tier 1 includes the most critical needs including climate change, governance, and the standards most affected by the changes in governance.

A.6 MEETING THE 2012 IRWM PLAN GUIDELINE REQUIREMENTS

As the IRWM Plan was developed, the RWMG maintained the list of requirements developed using the November 2012 IRWM Plan Guidelines to ensure acceptance and approval by the

State after completion of the IRWM Plan Update. **Table A-2** summarizes how the IRWM Plan satisfies Appendix H of the 2012 Guidelines. Detailed tables addressing specific requirements of the 2012 Guidelines are compiled and incorporated as **Appendix Q – State Guideline Requirement Tables**. **Appendix Q** also provides a short narrative on how each requirement is met, along with the various sub-sections where information can be found in the IRWM Plan.

Table A-2. IRWM Plan Update Standards Reference

IRWM Plan Standard	Section
Governance	B
Region Description	C, D
Goals & Objectives	E
State Resource Management Strategy	F
Integration	H
Project Review Process	G
Impacts and Benefits	I
Plan Performance and Monitoring	J
Data Management	K
Finance	L
Technical Analysis	M
Relation to Local Water Planning	N
Relation to Local Land Use Planning	N
Stakeholder Involvement	B, E, F, G, K, Q
Coordination	O
Climate Change	P

